



WESTFÄLISCHE  
WILHELMS-UNIVERSITÄT  
MÜNSTER



Institut für  
Erziehungswissenschaft

# **Access to Education and inequality**

## ***Re-thinking of EU Policies in terms of Accessibility of Education***

*Prof. Dr. Marcelo Parreira do Amaral*

*University of Münster, Institute of Education*

*Warsaw, 14. 05. 2015*

Eulnteg Session III: Social reforms for the sustainable and inclusive growth in the EU under demographic change

# Outline

- *Access to education and social inequality*
- *Accessibility* of education
- Education policies for growth *and* inclusion
- Concluding remarks

# **Access to education and social inequality**

- Access → crucial issue in policy, research and practice
- ‚more education equals more growth and inclusion‘-approach
- Education as mitigating or reproducing social inequalities?
- Access to education is not a ‘simple technical’ issue
- Need for multidimensional perspective → all social actors

# ***Accessibility* of education**

- Critique of a narrow concept of access
- Integrative approach
- Access is (re)produced and negotiated at various levels
- Structures of access *to* education and subjectively experience *of* accessibility

# ***Accessibility* of education**

- **multi-dimensional analysis:** four perspectives
  - structural
  - institutional
  - discourses and representation
  - subjective strategies and positioning;
- **Advantages of the approach**
  - access not as a given, but as a process of social differentiation
  - access as dynamic and interactive process
  - address the question “HOW”, i.e. the question of mechanisms

# Education policies for growth and inclusion

- EU education policies for growth and inclusion → need to inquire into issues of compatibility of orientations and objectives;
- Policies more often than not designed for adult needs → Target groups of policies highly heterogeneous
- Policies need to avoid one-size-fits-all solutions → need to account for different living conditions in the European regions and for varying life projects, interest and capabilities.

# Concluding remarks

- Focus on interaction of structures, institutions, discourses and individuals
- Countering individualization and responsabilization
- Access to education is a negotiation process and in the responsibility of all social actors → truly political process

**Thank you for your attention!**

[parreira@uni-muenster.de](mailto:parreira@uni-muenster.de)

GOETE was funded by the European Union under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research - Contract No. SSH-CT-2009-243868. See [www.goete.eu](http://www.goete.eu)



Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities

